

COBBETT'S WEEKLY POLITICAL REGISTER.

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LONDON, SATURDAY, APRIL 23, 1808.

[PRICE 10D.]

Nothing can be more mischievous to the community, generally speaking, than the turning of corn into spirituous liquors; and this evil would, at any rate, be lessened by the use of sugar instead of corn in the making of those liquors. Thus would our colonies be made to add to the quantity of food in the mother country; and to see such a measure opposed upon the ground of its injuring the growers of corn would be scandalous indeed; would be a shocking disgrace to the heads as well as to the hearts of the country gentlemen."—POLITICAL REGISTER, Vol. XI. p. 35.

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SUMMARY OF POLITICS.

CORN AGAINST SUGAR.—In the month of December 1806 (see the Parliamentary Debates, Vol. VIII. page 237), a committee was appointed to consider of the possibility of introducing sugar and molasses into use, in the distilleries and breweries. I never heard of any report, that was made by that committee; but, as will appear from the report of the debate, upon that occasion, some persons expressed their apprehension, that the measure, if adopted, would prove greatly *injurious to the growers of corn*. I was of a different opinion, and the reasons, upon which that difference was founded, were, at the time, stated in the Register of the 10th of January, 1807, Volume XI. p. 33, to which, as the means of sparing me some repetition, I beg leave to refer the reader.—The same committee, or a renewed one, have now made their report. It was laid before the House of Commons, on the 13th of this month; and, as appears from the statements in the newspapers (for I have not yet seen the authentic papers of the House, whence every thing of this sort is taken for insertion in my Parliamentary Debates), they recommend the passing of an act to suspend, for one year, by way of experiment, the use of corn in the distilleries, taking care, however, to authorize the Privy Council to take off the suspension, in case it should, upon trial, be found, that the measure produces a serious depression in the price of corn.—I do not recollect any measure to have been met by so apparently determined an opposition as this; and, though I am not on the side of the opposers, it does, I must confess, give me some little relief from that disgust, which I have, of late, experienced, to perceive that this opposition has nothing to do with party.—“Great and just alarm,” the opposers say, has been excited through the country by the proposition to introduce sugar instead of corn into the distilleries; because... because what? Because such a measure, “will, produce a glut in the corn market.” Thus, then, our

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alarm has, all of a sudden, changed its nature; from an alarm at approaching *scarcity* of corn, it is become an alarm at approaching *superabundance* of corn!—Sir HENRY MILD MAY said, that “he thought it right “to apprise the House, that the part of the “report which went to prohibit the use of “grain in distillation, though sanctioned by “the opinions of a *majority* of the committee, had, by no means, its unanimous approbation. If any legislative measure “should be proposed on the report, tending “to carry that principle into effect, he gave “notice that he should feel it his duty to “oppose it. There was no sufficient public “ground for such a measure, and it would “be *extremely injurious to the barley counties*, one of which he had the honour to “represent. He was confident that his “constituents would give him instructions “to oppose the proposition, and that they “would petition against the measure.”—MR. CHUTE, whom I have not heard before, since his election, “agreed with “the hon. baronet. The landed interest “was sufficiently depressed, and the influence of members whose consequence “arose from trade was already sufficiently “great, without striking a general blow at “an extensive branch of the agriculture of “the country. He should give his determined opposition to the measure.”—Now, I should, if things were as they ought to be, call myself one of the constituents of Sir Henry Mildmay and Mr. Chute. I am, in fact, one of the persons, whom they are said more immediately to represent; and, as little things are great to little men, I dare say, that I feel as much anxiety for the prosperity of Hampshire as either of them; but, I can assure them, that they will receive no instructions from me to oppose the suggested measure, and will find me opposed to any petition, which the county may be stirred up to prefer against it.—It is agreed, on all hands, that the measure would be greatly beneficial to the West Indies, which are, at present, in a state of distress hardly to be

described. So far, therefore, if we think it wise to maintain the possession of those colonies, the measure is a good one. But, it is contended, that the measure would be injurious to the barley growers at home. Supposing that to be true, it would then, with me, be a question of degree merely. I should inquire, whether the injury to the barley growers would be more or less than the relief to the sugar growers; the latter being, in my opinion, full as much entitled to the protection of the government as the former. Yes, say the opposers of the measure, but there is this consideration; that the measure will not be injurious to the barley growers only, it will be injurious to the whole nation by discouraging the growth of corn. Make this out, gentlemen, and I am with you; but, at present, I am, for the reasons which I will now endeavour to submit to the reader, with brevity and clearness, of a different opinion.—After having heard, from all quarters, so much anxiety expressed, lest, from the shutting of the ports of the continent and of America against us, we should experience the horrors to be expected from a scarcity of corn; after having seen the pains taken by Mr. Young and Mr. Wakefield to impress us with a just idea of the magnitude of our annual importation of corn; it must, I think, appear to the reader to be a strange proposition, that danger of scarcity will arise from a want of a market for what we ourselves grow in this country. But, let us hear the arguments of Mr. Wakefield. He disapproves (see last Number, pages 605 to 608), of any legislative measure that would deprive the farmer of such markets as the distilleries; he says, that this discouragement will produce a fear of bad prices, and inadequate returns for labour and capital; that this fear once excited in the mind of the farmer, he will relax in his exertions to raise corn. He further says, that the distilleries, by causing more corn to be raised than is necessary for feeding the nation, enable us, in a season of scarcity, to take this superabundance and apply it to feeding purposes, and that, therefore, the distilleries operate as a national grainery.—There is something very plausible in this argument; but, I think, that, upon examination, it will appear to be more specious than solid; for, what does it mean but simply this: that, in order to induce the farmers of a nation, to grow more corn than is, upon an average, necessary for the consumption of the nation, a part of what they grow must be annually bought of them for the purpose of being *thrown away*; for the purpose of being gotten rid of without becoming human food, or suste-

nance? I shall be told, perhaps, that, used in the distilleries, corn does become human sustenance; for that, though it comes out in the shape of spirituous liquors, and, therefore, cannot very well be called food, yet that it causes less beer to be drunk and less food to be eaten, than would be drunk and eaten, if there were no spirituous liquors. I do not know, that my opponents will make use of this argument; but, if they should, it will be a very good answer to themselves; for, if the use of spirituous liquors produce a saving of beer and food, then the disuse of those liquors will produce an additional demand for corn, in the shape of beer and bread; and, if the use of spirituous liquors produce no such saving, we come back to my proposition, namely, that the corn used in the distilleries is, considered as human sustenance, *thrown away*; and, according to the idea of Mr. Wakefield, it is necessary for a nation to raise a certain proportion of corn annually to be thrown away, in order to secure the said nation from the horrid effects of casual scarcity. Used in the distilleries does corn become human sustenance? YES. Well then, the distilleries are *no grainery*, for, if you suspend them in a time of scarcity, the mouths that fed upon them must necessarily fall upon sustenance in some other shape. If the answer be NO; then is the corn used in distilleries *thrown away*, for, if you talk to me of the value which the farmer gets for it, I remind you, that that value must come out of the labour of those who consume the spirituous liquors. If the corn be thrown away, it is full as well to throw away sugar as corn; if spirituous liquors be human sustenance, then we draw it from our colonies in sugar: what is more, *we can have it in times of scarcity as well as in times of plenty*; and the West-Indies become an inexhaustible grainery. It appears to me to be impossible for the most ingenious reasoner to get clear of this dilemma.—Before I proceed any further, I will insert an article from the Morning Chronicle upon this subject. “Last night the Report was made from the Committee to whom it was referred to consider whether the distillery should be prevented from using grain; and, as we anticipated, they have given it as their opinions, that it would be advisable to make the experiment of prohibiting the distillation of spirits from grain for one year. There was, however, it seems, a division in the Committee on this point, and the Report itself made a sensible impression on the House; so that no motion, either for or against the adoption of the measure, can be formed.—We have

felt it to protest ereachin countr towards nies bo world. country routine haps, in good ser have no Distiller part of barley f resource will be wheat ripen it ply to lands in ferent r of grain case, h when v stop the stock in corn—l growing “a Bill discour there is equal measur flected our own not be cal exp our hus farmers the lan more tha Wakefield one great market a powerful whence w all the c amongst v ruin of th first place distilleries exceed 30 age annu land. An to spre England rapt of land; it starve th provision

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 "felt it to be our duty to enter our feeble
 "protest against these most dangerous en-
 "croachments on the agriculture of the
 "country, which is surely of more value
 "towards its independence than all its colo-
 "nies both in the Eastern and Western
 "world. An experiment to sterilize the
 "country for one year—to interrupt the
 "routine of crops—to create a famine, per-
 "haps, in the kingdom. We trust in the
 "good sense of parliament, that we shall
 "have no such experiment.—It is to the
 "Distillery in particular that the northern
 "part of the kingdom looks in its culture of
 "barley for a market. Rob Scotland of this
 "resource, and four-fifths of its farmers
 "will be bankrupts: they cannot substitute
 "wheat for barley—their climate will not
 "ripen it; and the same argument may ap-
 "ply to a great proportion of the barley
 "lands in England.—This is a very dif-
 "ferent measure for stopping the distilling
 "of grain for a season of scarcity. In that
 "case, having a crop of barley in hand
 "when wheat is deficient, an act passes to
 "stop the distillery, so as to bring the whole
 "stock into use as a substitute for bread
 "corn—but here is a project to prevent the
 "growing of barley.—It might be entitled,
 "'a Bill to create a scarcity of Corn by
 "discouraging the growth thereof." Surely
 "there is no evil that can befall the country
 "equal to that which would flow from a
 "measure of this kind—and when it is re-
 "flected that we may be thrown entirely on
 "our own produce for subsistence, we shall
 "not be condemned to the trial of chimeri-
 "cal experiments, by which the course of
 "our husbandry is to be disturbed—and our
 "farmers are to be warned against sowing
 "the land!"—This article does little
 "more than dilute the argument of Mr.
 "Wakefield, namely, that the distilleries is
 "one great market for corn, take away this
 "market and you take away one of the most
 "powerful motives to the raising of corn,
 "whence will arise a diminished produce and
 "all the consequences of such a diminution,
 "amongst which is particularly mentioned the
 "ruin of the barley farmers.—Now, in the
 "first place, the quantity of barley used in the
 "distilleries of England and Scotland does not
 "exceed 300,000 quarters annually, the ave-
 "rage annual produce of about 70,000 acres of
 "land. And this is a market, the loss of which
 "is to spread ruin amongst the cultivators of
 "England and Scotland! It is to make bank-
 "rupts of four-fifths of the farmers of Scot-
 "land; it is to sterilize the land, and
 "starve the people; and that, too, by bringing
 "provisions into the country, or, at least,

something to supply the place of provisions,
 now thrown away!—Let us see, however,
 whether it be probable, that *less corn* would
 be raised on account of this measure. Wheat,
 we are told, could not be raised upon certain
 of the lands, which now bear crops of barley.
 But *oats* might, and grass would follow oats
 as well as barley. But, upon the supposi-
 tion, that the particular lands alluded to
 would bear nothing but barley, there are
 other lands, which now bear barley, and
 which would bear something else. Still, it
 must be confessed, that there would be one
 market lost; but, would no other market
 open? If you stop the distilleries will not the
 barley that they now consume go to the fat-
 ting of hogs and to various other purposes?
 The moment barley begins to be cheap, that
 moment it is given to hogs; and, if you ask
 me how the hog's flesh is to be disposed of;
 if you are still afraid, that the quantity of hu-
 man sustenance, in England and Scotland,
 will be too great; if you still dread a
 glutted market of provisions, there are the
West Indies, those very colonies, whom,
 you are afraid, the Americans will starve;
 who will give you, in times of plenty,
 sugar in exchange for your barley, made into
 pork, and from whom, in times of scarci-
 ty, you can, at any moment, withhold that
 pork. In calling *this* a granary, indeed,
 there would be something like reason and
 consistency.—But, the truth is, I believe,
 that no such exchange would be necessary to
 keep alive the motive for growing barley.
 It is, in a national point of view, completely
 irrational to speak of barley but as being
 an article of human sustenance; as a
 means of supporting human life; as, to
 use the common word, *subsistence*. Now,
 I think, it is a principle acknowledged
 upon all sides, that wherever there is
 subsistence there will be a *proportionate*
population, or, to use the words of Mr.
 MALTHUS (with whom I disagree as to
 the *checking of population*), "*population al-*
 "*ways treads close upon the heels of sub-*
 "*sistence.*" If this be the case, then, where
 is the ground of alarm at throwing an addi-
 tional quantity of subsistence in upon the
 community? This doctrine of Mr. Mal-
 thus being sound (and common sense says
 that it must be so) there never can be a want
 of a market for any quantity of barley that
 we can grow. There may be a temporary
 fall of price; but the permanent effect of
 withholding corn from the distilleries, and
 supplying the place of it by the produce of
 colonies belonging to ourselves, must be,
 either that of producing an exportation of
 hogs-meat, or of increasing our domestic po-

pulation, both causes being equally efficacious in preventing the discouragement and the decreased production and gains of the farmers.—Suppose the West Indies could supply us with barley enough for our distilleries, Mr. Wakefield would, if he were consistent, object to it, because, as he would say, the barley growers of England would be thereby discouraged. He would be of the same opinion with regard to Guernsey or Jersey; for the measure would still have precisely the same effect; and, upon the supposition that *new enclosures* tend to make an *increase* (which I think they do not) in the quantity of subsistence produced, he would, of course, also object to new enclosures, and, then, I should leave him to settle the point with Sir John Sinclair, and “the friends of agriculture,” who cry aloud and cease not for a *General Enclosure Bill*. This last argument was made use of by Mr. Perceval, to whom Mr. Windham replied, that in the case of new enclosures, the supply was, doubtless, increased, and the competition augmented; but, in the case contemplated, there would be an *exclusion* of one set of growers to the sole advantage of the other. I agree, that the immediate *advantage* will be solely upon the side of the colonies; but, this is no objection to a measure, provided *no injury* be sustained on the other side in consequence of that measure. “*Augmented competition*” is only another phrase for *decrease of price*; for, whether the market be wholly cut off, or only narrowed in its demand, though there may be a difference as to the degree, the principle continues the same; and, therefore, the seller has as good a right to complain of augmented competition as he has to complain of a total loss of the market. Pursuing this to an illustration: it is said, that the Scotch barley-grower will be injured, in consequence of this cutting off of a market for 300,000 quarters of barley, annually consumed in the distilleries; and that, as this measure is to be adopted after he has taken a long lease of his farm, he will not be able to pay his rent, and will become a bankrupt. This is to be the effect, we are told, of a loss of market. But, suppose, that the proposition of “the friends of agriculture” were adopted; suppose a *General Enclosure Bill* were passed, and suppose it were to answer the expected purpose, namely, that of causing an *increase of produce*. It would be a pitiful increase indeed, unless it exceeded 300,000 quarters of barley in a year; and, then, pray tell me, gentlemen, “friends of agriculture,” you, who, with Mr. Brand, are resolved to “oppose this mea-

sure in every stage,” whether the Scotch or the English barley-grower would not suffer as much from this increase of produce as from that loss of market, which, it is alledged, will be the effect of the measure now proposed?—As connected with a question like this, which embraces the general produce of the soil and the general interests of the nation, all the distinctions between barley-growers and wheat-growers are too trifling to be attended to. The kind as well as the amount of the produce will be regulated by the demand. The general market will tell the farmer what he is to sow, and the same infallible guide will tell the corn-dealer whither he is to send the fruit of the harvest.—Every argument made use of, with respect to the interests of the *cultivator*, applies, of course, to those of the *owner* of the soil; and, unless my reasoning be erroneous, neither can experience any permanent injury from the measure now in contemplation, while it is, upon all sides agreed, that the West India planters, so long and so severely oppressed by an accumulation of hardships, will therefrom derive considerable relief. Were there, indeed, any ground to apprehend, that the nation would experience an injury from this measure; were it a question between the West India planters and the people of England; I should say (though it would grieve me to be put to the necessity) let the West India planters perish, rather than England be endangered by scarcity; but, as I am convinced, that the measure now proposed will be greatly beneficial to the former, without producing any, even the slightest, danger or injury to the latter, either temporary or permanent, I hope, that, in the approaching discussion and decision, enlarged views and public spirit will prevail over local and interested motives.

WOODCOCKS AND SNIPES.—It is whimsical enough, that these poor little birds should become a subject of discussion amongst grave politicians; yet, as a *law* is about to be passed relative to these birds, and as two gentlemen (whose letters I insert) have thought it worth their while to make the proposed regulation a matter of such serious notice, I think it right to submit an observation or two thereon.—To the correspondent, who ridicules the idea of debating about little birds, while we are threatened with invasion, one may answer by asking him how it happens, that *he*, who never wrote to me before, came to write to me now, if he thought the subject so very unimportant.—The other correspondent seems to view the matter in quite a different

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light. He calls upon me, as "the champion of the just rights and liberties of the people," to interfere, "in order to preserve, for the middle and lower orders, who are to fight our battles, the liberty they have hitherto enjoyed, to follow the innocent amusement of killing Woodcocks and Snipes." Appealed to with so much solemnity, and anxious to preserve the good opinion of my correspondent, I shall give him my sentiments in the clearest manner that I am able.—In the first place, I must observe, that I am unacquainted with any right, which the making of Woodcocks and Snipes game is at all likely to abridge, as far, at least, as relates to any *amusements* of the people. The law, as it now stands, does, indeed, attach no penalty to the mere act of killing these birds, nor to the mere possession of them; but, I would ask this complainant, *where* the shooter is to find the birds? And, let the answer be what it may, unless the birds be found upon the shooter's *own land*, or land *rented* by him, he is liable to an action of trespass for even looking after the birds; and this liability arises, not from the statute, but from the *common law*. And, very wise and just is the law in this respect; for, is it not clear, that it would be impossible to have any thing worthy of the name of private property, if every man were at liberty to invade it, under the pretext of seeking after woodcocks and snipes or wild animals of any sort?—But, I shall be told, perhaps, that the contemplated law, will prevent unqualified persons from shooting woodcocks and snipes even by permission of the *owners* or *renters* of the land. To which I answer, that the prevention is already as complete as this dreaded law can possibly make it; for, to go a shooting woodcocks and snipes without spaniel, or game dog of some sort, is what no man thinks of; to be seen out with dog and gun the law takes *as proof* of being "in pursuit of game;" being in pursuit of game subjects the unqualified pursuer to the penalty of five pounds; and, as the same evidence is admitted with respect to the penalty in default of having taken out a game license, the unqualified person, who is found in pursuit of a snipe is *already* liable to all the law levelled against him, who is found in pursuit of a pheasant. How, then, can the unqualified part of the people suffer any abridgment of their *amusements* from the act now before parliament? Let us take an instance: you meet a man with dog and gun, beating along your meadow, or through your coppice. You ask for his *licence*. "I need none," says he, "I am in pursuit

"of snipes, or of woodcocks." But, if you inform against him, and prove that he was *out with dog and gun*, he is liable to the penalty of shooting without a licence; and, it is exactly the same with regard to the qualification.—The act, therefore, which is about to pass, will have no effect whatever in lessening the liberty to shoot or to hunt. Its effect will be to prevent the public sale of woodcocks and snipes. If the law pass, it will be a crime to *sell* these birds at all; and that will certainly be a check to the pursuing and the killing of them; but, then, observe, that those who kill these birds for *sale*, cannot be said to pursue them for "*amusement*." The fact is, that almost the whole of the woodcock and snipe market is supplied by gentlemen's game-keepers: a small share of the supply comes from the hands of mere poachers; and, in checking of the traffic of these descriptions of persons, it is not very easy to conceive how the liberties or the comforts of the "middle and lower orders of the people are likely to be abridged."—As to the game-laws, generally speaking, such a *quizz* of a code surely never before existed in the world! A code, which gives to the son a privilege, founded upon the rank of his father, and which, at the same time, denies that privilege to the father himself. It is, in short, one mass of inconsistency and confusion; a ridiculous medley of feudal privileges and pecuniary preferences. Game, like other things, should be *private property*, the proof of proprietorship being that the animal was upon the land of the claimant at the time of its being taken, killed, or found for pursuit. This, together with the law of trespass, as it already exists, would be quite effectual in the preserving of game of all sorts; but, until this be the law, quarrelling, heartburnings, and acts of oppression, will and must be the consequence of the existence of those animals, which, as far as one can judge upon such a matter, were created for the recreation and pleasure of man.

CURATES' STIPEND BILL.—I do not absolutely retract what I said, last week, in favour of this bill; but, upon reading over its clauses (having before merely seen a general description of it), I feel much less interest as to its success, than I before felt.—The allowance fixed on for the curate is *one-fifth* of the annual produce of the living, together with the use, upon certain considerations, of the parsonage house and glebe, or part of the latter. The *Bishop* is to see this law enforced; but, there is nothing to *compel* him to cause it to be enforced; for, as to the *appeal*, which the poor

curate is allowed to make from the Bishop to the Archbishop, is it not a mockery to talk seriously of such a provision, especially when he is exposed to costs, if he fail in his appeal? In fact, the bill will place at the mere mercy of the Bishops, not only the property of the incumbent, but also that of the patron. In *this shape* the bill must be an evil in place of a good; but, if the law were imperative upon the bishops, it appears to me, that it would be attended with exceeding good effects.

AMERICAN MONIES.—The reader will remember, that I predicted, that the *monies* of the holders of American funds would come to England in *protested bills of exchange*; or, rather, in bills that would meet with a protest instead of payment. I have now before me a letter from a merchant, subscribed with his name and place of abode, informing me, that a bill, being, perhaps, the *first* remittance of the monies of a *great* and *notorious* fund-holder, the sum upwards of *seven thousand pounds*, has come to hand, and has actually been *protested*. I shall not publish names, and I need not; but, I will express my hearty wish, that every succeeding bill may meet with the same fate; and, that, of all the vast sum of monies, not as much as would purchase the insertion of a single puff paragraph in the Morning Chronicle may ever reach the hands of the greedy owner, who, were he begging his bread, would not merit a crust from an English hand.—The excuse, I hear, is, in these cases, that the *embargo* prevents ships from coming to bring the worth of the bills drawn upon England. But, *who* made the embargo? Who but the Americans themselves? What an impudent excuse! I, however, have no ground of complaint against the Americans, upon this score; for, if, from any supernatural cause, they should prove to be honest men, my readers may be led to doubt of my veracity.—What an impudent excuse! “I have barred up my shop-door, and, therefore, cannot send you any goods in return for your monies.” What an impudent thing! But, it is good; very good, thus to see their flatterers and defenders punished by them.

MR. SCOTT'S LETTER.—This letter, which, in answer to A. B. C. (page 378 of the present volume) was to have been published last week, was, at the joint request of Lord Oxford and a common friend of the parties, withheld from publication. Mr. Scott has, as will be seen below, consented to withdraw the letter altogether; but, I think it a duty I owe to him to say, that the letter contained, as far as I am able to judge,

a full refutation of all the assertions and insinuations, contained in the letter of A. B. C. unaccompanied with an injurious reflection upon any person whatever.

Panton Square, April 21, 1808.

MR. SCOTT'S LETTER.

SIR,—As I understand my letter, announced for publication in your last paper, in answer to the anonymous letter of A. B. C., was suspended at the particular request of the Earl of Oxford, it is but justice to myself to observe, that the public being made any party to this business was not begun by me, and that, if I abstain from urging any further publication upon the subject, after all the means of injuring me have been exhausted, it must depend upon the conduct of other persons; and, if in vindicating myself, I may wound the feelings of those persons, which it is not in my nature wantonly to do, and which I can never do without wounding my own, they ought to consider a little the precept we have been all taught, “Do unto others, as you would have them do unto you.”—I am, &c.—JAMES SCOTT.—*Norfolk Street, April 20, 1808.*

MR. WAKEFIELD'S 3D. LETTER.

SIR,—Having in my last endeavoured to point out the only available resource left to the country, at the immediate moment of a scarcity, I am anxious to now call your attention to the causes which have made Great Britain an importing corn country. That we are so, I consider as an indisputable fact; a correspondent of yours however, quarrels with this assertion, because I have not brought my account of import and export down to the close of last year. After the holidays I will furnish you with the accounts of import and export for 1806 and 1807, as I am desirous to remove every doubt, which can be raised of the existence of these facts, upon which he justly says “my arguments depend.” But, whatever may be the accounts for the two last years, I wish it to be distinctly understood, that my fears, my anxieties, do not arise from a review of what has occurred in any one or two years, they arise from observing that for seventy years at one period, we were an exporting corn country, that we have not only ceased to export, but that we now actually import, and have imported for more than the last thirty years; not only so, but that the proportion of import has increased in an astonishing degree. This alteration is the fact upon which I rest every argument, every opinion which I have upon the subject; and whether (as your correspondent suggests) it has or has

not occurred in the course of a single year, the last if he pleases it, has nothing I think to do with the question. Before entering upon the subject of my present address, I will answer the other points relied upon in the letter which you have inserted in Saturday's Register. Your correspondent states a certain breadth of wheat grown every year in the kingdom, and an average produce upon this quantity of land, if this data are true, the whole produce is justly stated, and it would most amply feed all those who depend upon wheaten bread for subsistence, but it is necessary he should establish his data with as much precision as the Custom House books do the entries of corn inwards and outwards. It is very easy to suppose "fifty millions of acres to be in a state of cultivation," and to suppose "one half of them, are under the plough," but I want more than vague supposition. Especially as without taking up the pages of your Register in replying minutely to all parts of this calculation, its fallacy may be shewn by asking what has been done with the corn which has been imported in the course of the last thirty-five years. It has not been exported. This the Custom-house books prove. Has it been burnt? Has it been thrown into the sea? Or, has it in some shape or other been consumed by the people of England? If it has been consumed by the people, as beyond all doubt is the fact, then it is impossible for us to have been yearly growing more than we consume, and of course the supposititious account of land under the plough, and an annual surplus produce of wheat is erroneous.—The more I consider the principles of political economy, the more am I convinced of the truth of the statement of Sir James Stewart, that every man, every body of men, every nation is impelled to active exertion by the feelings of self interest. Now, has or has not, the interest of the British farmer been sufficiently attended to? Has the money price of his produce been allowed to keep pace with that of his expences? Has he been as well paid for investing his property in agriculture, as he would have been by investing it in any undertaking of manufactures or commerce. I have not myself any doubt, but that he has not been rewarded; I have not any doubt but that the price of grain does not pay the farmer, the use of his capital, his labour, and risk. Can any one doubt, but that if agriculture would have yielded equal or greater interest to the owner of a capital, than West Indian adventure, or foreign commerce, capitalists would have invested their property in the manufacture of corn; for a farmer is in truth, no other than

a manufacturer, and that also of the staple commodity of the country. Is this the case? Do we see large capitalists employing their money, devoting their time and attention to the growth of corn. No! Then what is the reason why they do not? It is because such undertakings do not answer their purpose, if they did there are no men who would be more eager to engage in farming speculations. It is however necessary before I proceed further, that I should establish this important and ruinous fact beyond all kind of dispute, for upon it the whole of my subsequent reasoning will be built, and depend a comparison of the laws of 1670, 1688, and 1706, and those of 1773 and 1791 will be nearly sufficient to convince you of this fact. By those of the first period a bounty was given upon the export of wheat till the price equalled 48s. per quarter. By those of the last period bounty ceased when wheat was 44s. the quarter!!! The money price of every article of manufacture and commerce has increased in price; in other words, the value of money has fallen. Yet, in the face of this acknowledged fact, it is expected that the money price of corn is to be stationary!! worse than stationary! decreasing!! But this is only a part of the evil, this is only some of these facts, which from the evidence I have to offer in support of the melancholy proposition which I laid down in the early part of my letter, for in addition to all the foregoing facts, it is necessary to take into full and serious consideration, the augmented and augmenting expences of the farmer, the money price of his produce has stood still, while every machine, every barn, every article of his dead stock, has advanced in proportion to the fall in the value of money. Rent has in the same proportion advanced upon him; so have the poor rates, so have taxes. At the suggestion of a committee of the House of Commons, the Board of Agriculture in the year 1804, sent circular letters throughout the kingdom, to ascertain the then expences of cultivation, and amount of produce. A similar inquiry had been made fourteen years before, and the result of a comparison between them is, that while the expences of the farmer have augmented in this short period, in the enormous proportion of thirtyone per cent. his produce has only increased six and half per cent. The two last items of his increased expenditure claim particular consideration, for as the poor rates are now levied they fall almost entirely upon the farmer. For rents or annual value being almost exclusively rated, every other species of capital escapes from contribution. And in the last

century this burthen has more than quintupled. As to taxes, that on horses employed in agriculture, is a direct tax upon the farmer, and upon him only; and as the income tax is now levied, that also is a direct tax upon him; for it is not a rate upon his income, but bears a fixed proportion to his rental, whether he gains or loses by his farm. Yet this is called a tax upon his income? The mercantile interest take better care of themselves, they have their averages and their allowances for bad debts, not so with the farmer, he has no allowances for bad seasons, no average is allowed him for variation of profit, from the fluctuation of price. Hence it appears to me, that it is but too certain the employment of capital and enterprise in farming, pays an infinitely less profit than their employment in any other pursuit or undertaking whatever. It remains then, to consider the best means of adding to the profits of the farmer, and thus by the certain, though gradual operation of the principle of self interest, to prompt him to a more perfect and extended cultivation. Tythes have often been urged as damping the ardour of farming enterprise, but some facts are on record, which warrant the conclusion, that at the most tythes have but a feeble and partial operation, they have been gathered in every period of our agricultural history during which a long course of farming prosperity has enriched the nation; and wherever a supposed cause has equally existed in two periods, the one prosperous, and the other calamitous, it does not seem the soundest reasoning to rectify it as the source of the change. I therefore, feel inclined to dismiss tythe from my consideration of the subject, as it tends to draw away the mind from that great and efficient cause, to which only the alteration can with any truth be attributed. I have already alluded to the poor rates and taxes, and concerning them I shall merely observe in addition, that their injurious operation has been within these thirty or forty years, for during the existence of the revolution corn laws, the poor rates scarcely doubled; but during the modern period, they have more than trebled, and the taxes I have named have been imposed within the last fifteen years. Inclosures merit particular consideration, if they should be forced upon the farmer, it will augment the evil of which I am complaining; but if only encouraged by means of facilitating the obtainment of inclosure bills, the bringing the waste lands into cultivation will not proceed faster than the joint prosperity of the farmer, and the country will warrant. Inclosures, however will rather be the effect of such

prosperity, than its positive parent, though afterwards they will have the effect of upholding and perpetuating it. I shall, therefore, postpone the further observations I propose to offer you upon them, until I have fully considered the difference between the revolution corn laws, and those of 1773 and 1791. In doing which I shall endeavour to convince you, that to this difference, and to this almost alone, should be attributed the danger to which the country is exposed, by not producing provisions equal to its consumption; but to avoid trespassing too much upon the pages of your Register, I will defer this subject to my next letter.—And am, Sir, yours, &c.—EDWARD WAKEFIELD.—*Duke Street, Westminster, April 18, 1808.*

ENCLOSURE BILL.

SIR,—I observed in your last Register, that you stated your objections to a general Enclosure Bill. It cannot but be admitted that the lands now enclosed might be cultivated so as to produce more than they now do. Farms might be better fenced, and better planted, and fallows altogether exploded. But, Mr. Cobbett, I beg you to consider that there are certain things necessary before a farm can be improved, viz. capital, knowledge, and industry. Numberless people now in possession of land, and likely to continue so, have not even one of these requisites. If an Enclosure Bill was passed, I presume that many master manufacturers, and those who have hitherto employed their capitals in foreign commerce, would turn their attention to the cultivation of land, which would surely be more beneficial to the country, than were they to live in idleness upon the interest of their money. It need not be said that they have not a sufficient knowledge of agriculture, as with the assistances now to be obtained, a man with capital and industry may soon become a tolerable good farmer. But, Sir, if the legislature was to go no farther, than to pass an act to enclose open field lands, what an immense difference this would soon make in the food and other articles brought to market; for these lands are from necessity cultivated in the very worst way. I ought to leave the discussion of this important subject to more able writers, I trust that Mr. Arthur Young and others will not let the matter rest. But I cannot help making one or two more remarks. You ask, "would a general enclosure cause more persons to be born and raised up?" Without doubt it would; but the tilling of more land would shortly create great abundance, and years would

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[657] lapse before the population could advance so as to occasion distress, from numbers bearing hard upon the necessities of life. You also say, "that it would cause no increase in the quantity of food raised." I cannot think you will continue to hold this opinion, when you consider that the lands now waste, by good management, would yield in the course of a few years, acre for acre nearly as much as the best lands in the country. Before you make up your mind completely upon this subject, I recommend it to you, Sir, to take a tour amongst the Mendip hills in Somersetshire, where I doubt not, if you inquire as to the state of that county previous to its enclosure, you will be satisfied of the advantages to be derived from the culture of wastes. But not to take up more of your time, I shall only add, that were a General Enclosure Bill to be passed, little advantage I think would accrue from the division of wastes into small portions; but, on the other hand, if divided into farms of from one to three hundred acres, the benefit to the nation would be beyond all calculation.—I am, Sir, &c.—
M. H.—*March 14, 1808.*

WOODCOCKS AND SNIPES.

SIR,—However I may differ from you on certain political measures, I have ever considered you, as a true champion for the just rights and liberties of the people; and, under this impression, venture to offer you my sentiments, on the intention of ministers to comprehend in the list of game, woodcocks and snipes.—As a measure of revenue, it appears to me extremely absurd; for, as both woodcocks and snipes, are birds difficult to shoot, it cannot be supposed that a qualified person, who is a good shot, would restrict himself solely to those birds, when by taking a licence, he would have a much greater scope of amusement; and might easily repay himself the expence of it, by killing other game. As a proof of this, I know several gentlemen in my neighbourhood, whose servants in the space of one month, sell more hare skins alone, than would pay for a licence.—Was this boasted country (always depicted as overflowing with resources) in so desperate a situation, as to require the paltry augmentation which this measure could effect; would it not be better, to allow unqualified persons the liberty they have hitherto enjoyed, on paying a certain annual sum for this permission; say 2s. 6d. or even 5s. per annum; that this tax would be more productive, there cannot be a doubt; and it would also give more general satisfaction; the penalties for killing game would remain

in full force, and those found trespassing against them, could be equally punished. The markets would as usual be supplied with those birds, so that those persons, who had not leisure, or skill to procure them, might occasionally enjoy little dainties. But, it now appears, Mr. Cobbett, that such delicate morsels are not fitting for the middle and lower classes of Englishmen; yet those are the people who are to fight our battles; those are the people, who ground almost to dust by the tax gatherer, are called on in the same breath, to relinquish one of their few and innocent amusements, and to shed their last drop of blood in preserving inviolate, our free and most excellent constitution. It may be asserted, that many persons under pretence of shooting these birds destroy other game; and, it is therefore, necessary to put a stop to such practice by the law in question. To such persons I beg to answer, that in spite of this intended regulation, an unqualified free Englishman, will still be permitted to shoot sparrows; nay, more, ducks, &c. Therefore the same pretence will exist in full vigour, notwithstanding this new act of the legislature.—Where then, Mr. Cobbett, are we to look for the reasons of its adoption. Is it that our nobility, and rich commoners, are alone worthy of slaying and eating woodcocks and snipes; is it that at a late route of my Lady Pentweazles, there was a deficiency of those delicacies. Or, is it intended as a measure to reimburse the Treasury, for the grant so lately bestowed on the family of poor Lord Lake?—Not being an adept in the learned languages, many of your learned readers, may doubtless, criticise the subject, language, and style of this letter; should you, Sir, however, think it intelligible to the plainer part of your readers, and not altogether unworthy of your notice; you will oblige me by inserting it in your valuable Register.—I am, Sir, &c.—AN ENEMY TO OPPRESSION.

WOODCOCKS AND SNIPES.

SIR;—I beg leave to return you my sincere thanks for the very great pleasure I have often received from the reading your useful and entertaining paper, of which I am a pretty constant reader, and, in general, an admirer. I confess, that, esteeming you a man of great penetration and sound judgment, I felt some apprehension for the fate of my dear country, from your statement of its situation and circumstances; but, I am happy to inform you, my fears and apprehensions are all entirely done away by the circumstance of the chancellor of the exchequer having just now brought in a bill

to prevent the shooting of woodcocks and snipes as game. If some little Nimrod of a lordship had brought in such a bill at this time, it might have lessened my fears, but would not have removed them; but, when I see one so high in office amusing himself in a thing of such very little consequence, I feel perfectly at ease as to any danger of an invasion. Mr. Cobbett, I am not ambitious of appearing in print, and yet I could wish this letter to be published, to convince this upstart, self-created emperor, with what contempt we look upon his menaces; and that, whilst he is threatening us with invasion, subjugation, and all the horrors of extermination, we are smilingly contemplating the additional pleasure our sportsmen will enjoy in the next shooting season.—As I am not a man of learning, perhaps I may not know the true meaning of the word "patriot:" if I do, I can, with great truth, subscribe myself—A TRUE PATRIOT.

OFFICIAL PAPERS.

SWEDEN.—*Answer of Sweden to the Danish Declaration of War. Dated Stockholm, March 21, 1808.*

The court of Denmark had made an alliance with France, was prepared to receive French troops in its country, collected transport vessels in its port, fitted out all its ships in the road of Copenhagen, to cover a French expedition against Sweden, and then issued a declaration of war. Denmark accused Sweden of being the cause of this rupture, because she did not make her compliments of condolence on the loss of her fleet, because she would not co-operate to avenge that humiliation, and especially because she sought aid from England against such an aggression.—The relations of the king with his neighbouring power were those of a simple peace. There was neither alliance, nor any convention whatever which traced out for the two courts any common course for their political conduct; therefore when Sweden, Russia, and Prussia fought in conjunction against France, Denmark, under the shade of her neutrality, appeared the friend of all. The king witnessing this system, and convinced by some explanations, demanded in the course of the year 1806, of the impossibility of obtaining a change favourable to Sweden, could not entertain a hope that the naval force of Denmark could ever be useful to him; on the contrary, after the peace of Tilsit, he had every reason to fear that, by the suggestions of Russia and France, it might be one day turned against him. His majesty, therefore, thought it proper to observe a

profound silence relative to the events which passed in his vicinity last autumn, leaving to England and futurity to justify them.—It is due to truth, however, to declare, that the court of London did not invite Sweden to take part in this expedition, nor confided in her till the moment of its being carried into execution. Therefore, not the least movement was made in Sweden on this occasion. The English fleet arrived and departed without entering into any port of Sweden, and the auxiliary troops, embarked in Pomerania, were restored in virtue of a separate article in the convention concluded at London, relative to this object, on the 17th of June, 1807, when certainly there was as yet no reference to this expedition. The following is the article:—"It is fully understood, that, in case that unforeseen circumstances should render impracticable the object of this convention, or that his Britannic majesty should find it necessary to withdraw the said troops (the German legion) from Swedish Pomerania, the stipulation of this convention shall in no manner prevent his Britannic majesty from giving such orders as he may judge proper with respect to the ulterior disposition of these troops which are now placed under the orders of his Swedish majesty."—The court of London has since fully justified this enterprize, and the experience of every day justifies it. Numerous French armies remained in lower Saxony and over-awed the north. There were still nations to subjugate, ports to shut, and forces to direct against England. They were to penetrate at any rate: they would have acted in any case and under any pretence that might have offered. At present it is the expedition against the Danish fleet which is the rallying word of the whole league. What is remarkable is, that the Danish government, already beset by French troops, overpowered, impelled, and even paid by France, issues a declaration of war against Sweden, without daring even to name the power which forces it to act. It seeks with embarrassment grievances and reasons to appear to have had in this determination a will of its own. It cites the remonstrances of Sweden against the arrest of the Swedish mails as vexatious, while in its severity against English correspondence, it would not suffer it to pass according to treaty, and declares that it is imperiously obliged to take these measures. It pretends to know the thoughts of the king, and imagines them hostile, though for some months it had concerted an aggression upon Sweden. It pretends to reason on the in-

interests of the country, though it has abandoned its own interests, and even its existence, to a foreign influence. In fine, it reproaches Sweden with having provided for her defence by a subsidiary treaty, though itself is paid for an aggression; and then it pronounces, though indeed with a kind of timidity, the word mercenary, which the government that pays it had probably dictated to it.—It is proposed here to render to his Britannic majesty the most authentic solemn testimony, that in all his transactions with Sweden he never demanded offensive measures; nor required any thing that was not perfectly compatible with its tranquillity and independence. The most convincing proof of this is the promptitude with which his ministry acceded to the proposition of the king for the pacification of the Baltic, by a formal promise not to send thither any ships of war, but on conditions useful and honourable to all the north. Let the Danish government read in this proposition the complete refutation of the complaints of which the manifesto against Sweden is composed; and in the moments when it shall return itself, let it compare the state of things which the king has desired with that which France and Russia wish. Let all the allies of France read in this consent of England the difference between the connections which unite the two courts and those which enchain them, and let them pronounce on which side is to be found a due regard for particular interests, and a just moderation for the general good.—Denmark herself has been, during a long time, the object of this moderation, and did not cease to be so till she became absolutely dangerous. When the north was outraged by the devastation of lower Saxony, the oppression of the Hanseatic towns, what did she to avenge them? Sweden, England, and Russia made war for this object; but no one thought of forcing Denmark to take part in it. She was the ally of Russia, then, as well as at present; why did she not embrace her cause? What could she then allege for her tranquillity that Sweden cannot now allege? All this is explained by the single fact which she endeavours to conceal—that she is at present under the influence of the French government. Had England followed the principles of this enemy, she would not have waited the moment of her surrender to disarm her, she would have invaded her several years before; she would have guarded her, and all this with a view to the good of the north.—Her ancient alliance with Russia is made a pretext for this aggression, though all the world knows that it is merely defensive, and that it re-

mained suspended during the late wars with Russia, when perhaps that power might have claimed it. The court of Denmark, in order to justify its proceedings, hesitates not to make all kinds of assertions; dares to defend the injustice of Russia, and betrays a premeditated plot; and all this it does to conceal the chief, nay, only reason, which is—that Denmark is the ally of France.—But injustice and falsehood find their end; honour and truth will triumph in their turn. His majesty, relying on the justice of his cause, hopes, with conscious pride of reigning over a brave and loyal people, so often tried by dangers, and held up by the Almighty, that the same Providence will vouchsafe to bless his army, and restore to his subjects a safe and honourable peace, to the confusion of his enemies.

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RUSSIA AND SWEDEN.—*Intercepted Correspondence, found upon the Person of the Russian Courier.*

The irruption of the Russian troops into Finland, and the incendiary proclamations circulated in the province, were already known to the king, though the minister of Russia, M. Alopeus, had not yet made any communication that could pave the way for such intelligence, and no couriers nor dispatches from the Swedish ambassador at Petersburg had arrived since those events.—Considering, therefore, that minister as deprived of his public quality by the insidious aggression of his court, as a dangerous enemy, by the revolutionary principles with which that aggression was accompanied, and as a hostage for the ambassador, whose liberty had in all probability been violated, his majesty ordered, on the 2d of March, that a military guard should be stationed with M. Alopeus.—This measure, which, in every other circumstance, would have been extremely repugnant to the king, has been fully justified by the event: a courier for Petersburg arrived at Scyneldskar on the 22d, and set out on the 28th of February by Tornea, for Stockholm, having been arrested on the 7th of March, a mile from Harnosand, with the following dispatches:

No. 1.—Sir; the baron de Stedingk has transmitted to me, on the 9th of Jan., an official note (of which I herewith send you a copy), in answer to mine of the 16th of Nov. Its contents not being more satisfactory than the preceding official communication of that ambassador, with respect to what an august master expected, (a) nothing more

(a) To what his imperial majesty had demanded—Yes—The pacification of the Bal-

was to be hoped from prolonging, in circumstances so pressing (*b*), a correspondence which has already lasted more than four months, and produced no result; the emperor has resolved to issue the declaration which you will find herewith, in order to ascertain definitively the resolutions of the court of Stockholm.—Though I shall transmit this declaration to baron Stedingk, the emperor directs you, Sir, to communicate it to the ministry of his Swedish majesty. You will observe to them on this occasion, that it still depends on the king to preserve good harmony between the two States (*c*). But that the most essential interests of Russia do not allow his imperial majesty to admit, in the present situation of affairs, the least doubt of the disposition of Sweden with regard to Russia (*d*).—I have the honour to be, &c.—COUNT NICOLAS DE ROMANZOFF. St. Petersburg, Feb. 5, (17) 1808.

To Mr. Alopeus.

tic sea; but to what he expected perhaps—No.—If he expected from Sweden what he had himself granted to France, the sacrifice of his interests and his independence.

(*b*) The fear of the English must have been very pressing; notwithstanding an extraordinary delay of the English mails, the answer of England arrived at Stockholm on the 16th of March, still a long time before a maritime expedition in the Gulf of Finland was physically possible. The court of Sweden acceded to the proposition, consented not to disturb the tranquility of the Baltic, if Sweden were left at peace.—Thus, there might still exist in the world a peaceful and happy corner: Russia would not permit it. It remains to be seen, whether her insidious invasions of Finland will protect her coasts from the English fleets.

(*c*) The Russian army must have entered Finland before the declaration could have been delivered, much more before the arrival of an answer. Yet have they still the impudence to talk of good harmony. What was expected from the king was in fact so illegal, so humiliating, that whoever knew the character of his majesty, could never expect that he would comply willingly. The prince Royal of Denmark has been highly extolled for having refused to treat with England, after hostilities; yet has this been proposed to the king. Contradictions, absurdities, and falsehood, are the ordinary attendants of injustice.

(*d*) There was already no doubt of the disposition of the king. Every thing was on the footing of peace till the 2d February, when the king sent for M. Alopeus to ask

No. II.—Copy of a Note from the Swedish Ambassador, Baron Stedingk, to the Minister, Count de Romanzoff, dated 9th (21st) of Jan. 1808.

The king having already communicated to the Court of St. Petersburg, in answer to the Note of the 24th Sept. (Oct. 6,) his opinion on the present position of the North, and the difficulty of applying it to the engagements of 1780, his majesty had some hope of gaining the assent of his imperial majesty, to the evidence of these statements. The slightest glance at the circumstances of that time and those of the present, seem sufficient to shew their immense disparity; and the Cabinet of St. Petersburg ought not to hesitate more than any other to pronounce on which side was the preponderance at that time, and on which side it is at present.—Russia, the principal support of the convention of 1780, was the first to abolish it in 1803. If it was at her invitation that Sweden acceded to the new system, under her auspices she was then reconciled to England; she, however, contracted direct engagements with that power, which, according to the rules of public morality, she thinks herself obliged to observe, while the other contracting party shall not infringe the engagement on its part.—The armed neutrality of 1780 being once abandoned, the shutting of the Baltic Sea, founded in the concert and common armaments which it stipulated, appeared the less to regard Sweden, as since the time of the last convention, there has existed in this respect neither concert nor even unity of principles, among the powers on the shore of this sea. And this shutting, which, at the time of the declaration, signified properly the defence of the Sound, is at present become much more difficult to be executed, since the English have found the passage of the Great Belt very practicable for ships of war, and still more since the Danish marine no longer exists.—In general, a change in the principles of neutrality adopted in the last instance, would not only be contrary to the subsisting engagements of the king, guaranteed by Russia herself. It would probably be of no effect by not producing any change in the principles of England during the war; it could only tend to occasion a rupture between the two states, useless to the ally of Russia, hurtful perhaps to herself, and certainly ruinous to Sweden. But with this attachment to his engagements,

him what was intended by the armaments of Russia on the frontiers? And informed him that he was obliged to place himself in a state of defence on his side.

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the king is not insensible to the advantages of the pacification of the Baltic. It is possible that England might consent to the neutrality of that sea; that she might promise not to send thither any ships of war, if the measure adopted against British commerce, throughout almost all the coasts of the Baltic, did not provoke her armaments, or if new hostilities did not call on her to act as an auxiliary.—This is a point of view, at least, which appears to unite the commercial interests of the whole North; and which the court of St. Petersburg will, perhaps, find sufficiently important to merit its particular attention.—It is in these terms that the undersigned ambassador extraordinary of his majesty the king of Sweden has received orders to reply to the note which his excellency count Romanzoff has addressed, of the date 16-28 of November, and which he hastened to transmit to his court. He profits by this opportunity to renew to count Romanzoff the assurances of his high consideration.—St. Petersburg, 9-21 Jan. 1808.

No. III.—The emperor, justly indignant when he learned the violence which England had committed against the king of Denmark, faithful to his own character, and in the spirit of that constant solicitude which he feels for the preservation of the interests of his empire, informed the king of Great Britain that he could not remain insensible to this outrage, this unexampled spoliation, which England has permitted herself against a king, his relative, his friend, and the ancient ally of Russia (*e*).—His imperial majesty communicated this determination to the king of Sweden by a note, which was transmitted to his ambassador on the 24th of Sept., 1807.—A positive treaty, contracted in 1780, by the empress Catherine and the late king, Gustavus III., a second concluded in 1800 by the late emperor Paul and the king who reigns at present (*f*), contain-

(*e*) These sentiments of his imperial majesty towards relatives, friends, and allies, seem for a moment encouraging, as they are all titles applicable to the king only a few months ago, and which he has not since done any thing to forfeit.

(*f*) The sense of an article of a treaty has often been disputed, and its application contested; but never has a recent convention, formally concluded and ratified, been passed over in silence, to cite anterior engagements, evidently annulled by it; the cabinet of Petersburg refers to the convention of 1780 and 1800, concluded against England, and is silent with respect to that of 1801, concluded with her. The emperor returns ar-

ed the reciprocal and formal engagement to maintain the principle, that the Baltic is a close sea, and to guarantee that sea and its

bitrarily to the engagements of his two predecessors, tacitly invalidating those which he has contracted himself. The state of war in which his imperial majesty finds himself with England, naturally brought with it the abolition of any existing convention with that power. Sweden was not at all concerned in this war, that which was stipulated in 1801, between her and Russia on the one side, and between her and England on the other, might and ought equally subsist so long as the king was at peace with both powers.—By a simple decision, Russia might renounce the convention of 1801 with Sweden, for their very maritime convention was abolished, and things naturally returned to the state in which they were, previous to 1780, every one composing his system of neutrality according to his own principles of the law of nations.—By a double decision, at present Russia suppresses the convention last concluded, and re-establishes the two former, which are diametrically opposite to it; and finds a cause for war in the refusal of the king of Sweden to yield to this despotism. But let us see in what manner Russia wishes to re-establish the armed neutrality. Pretending that Sweden ought to exclude from the Baltic even English merchant ships, she reproaches her with having wished that the ports of Germany should be open to English commerce. The following is the separate article I. of this famous convention, and let any one judge whether count Romanzoff had read it:—"As his imperial majesty of all the Russias, and his majesty the king of Sweden, are always equally interested in watching over the tranquillity and safety of the Baltic sea, and protecting it from the troubles of war, and the cruisions of privateers; a system the more just and natural, as all the powers, the dominions of which surround it, enjoy a profound peace; they have mutually agreed to continue to maintain, that it is a close sea, incontestibly such by its local situation, in which all nations may and ought to navigate in peace, and enjoy all the advantages of a perfect calm; and to take for that purpose all such measures as may be proper to guarantee that sea and its coasts, from all hostilities, piracies, and acts of violence. They will likewise maintain the tranquillity of the North Sea, on their coasts, as far as circumstances and the interest of their states shall render it necessary."

coasts from all hostility, violence, and vexation, employing for this purpose all the means which might be in their power. His imperial majesty, considering these two treaties, not only conceived himself entitled, but thought he had a right, to claim the co-operation of Sweden against England.—The king did not deny the engagements which have been referred to, but he refused all co-operation so long as the French armies should not be removed from the coasts of the Baltic, and the German ports be shut against British commerce. The object was to express the violence committed by England, and which had irritated all Europe. The emperor demanded of the king his co-operation, founded on these treaties, and that monarch proposed to him, in answer, to defer the execution of treaties to another period, and to employ himself at present in procuring to England the commerce of all the ports in Germany; in one word, to serve that same England, against whom the question was to take measures of defence. (g)—It is consequently difficult to prove more fully the partiality of the king of Sweden for the king of Great Britain than he has himself established it.—His imperial majesty caused a second note to be transmitted on the 16th of November, by which, stating to the king that he was about to break with England, he again claimed his co-operation. (h)—This note remained nearly two months without an answer, and that which was given, and transmitted to the ministers of his imperial majesty, on the 9th of this month, was similar to the preceding. (i)—The emperor, far from repenting of his moderation, reflects with pleasure, that he had hitherto employed all the means in his power in endeavours to recal his Swedish majesty to the only system which is suited to his states (k); but, in fine, he owes to his people, to the safety of his empire (l), which is his

(g) This question does not regard Sweden, which was at peace with England.

(h) The armed neutrality no longer binding her, there was no other treaty, convention, or promise, by which she was bound.

(i) This note, which is given entire above, was, however, such, that count Romanzoff did not continue to cite a word of it, fearing to bring to mind the convention of 1801, and the conciliatory proposition of the king.

(k) According to the principles generally received, it was for the king himself to judge with respect to this.

(l) It is so improbable that the invasion of Finland could be really considered by the

supreme law, not to leave any longer the co-operation of Sweden with Russia and Denmark against England an undecided question.—The emperor being informed that the cabinet of St. James's, endeavouring to re-attach Denmark to its system by fear, had threatened that the king of Sweden should send troops into Zealand, in return for which the possession of Norway should be secured to him (m); the emperor learning, in like manner, that when the king left him without an answer, he was secretly treating for an alliance at London (n); his majesty found, that the interest of his empire would be very ill secured, if, when the struggle should commence between England and Russia, the king of Sweden, so near to his states, should veil for a time, under the appearance of a pretended neutrality, the sentiments of a known attachment to England. His imperial majesty could not leave in uncertainty the positions of Sweden with regard to Russia. He could not, by consequence, admit his neutrality.—The dispositions of the king being ascertained, nothing remained for his imperial majesty but to have recourse, without delay, to all the means which Providence had confided to him (o) for the security of his empire; and of this he informs (p) the king, and all Europe.—Acquitting himself thus of what the safety of his empire requires of him, the emperor is ready to convert the measures which he is about to take into a measure of prudence, if the king will join Russia and Denmark, in order to shut the Baltic against England till a maritime peace. He invites, for the last time, the king his brother-in-law, and with all the warmth of true friendship (q), no longer to hesitate to fulfil his engagements, and to adopt the only system which is adapt-

Cabinet of St. Petersburg as warding off from the ports of Russia all danger from the English fleet, that it is not unreasonable to suppose that it was some other fear by which it was impelled, perhaps that of the entrance of a French army into Russia.

(m) False report of Mr. Rist; and Mr. Canning, who has a copy of the conference, will prove that it was Mr. Rist who asked whether Sweden was to co-operate, and who took silence for an affirmative.

(n) The king had no other than defensive connections, and they were innocent, except in the eyes of the aggressor.

(o) See the proclamations in Finland.

(p) After the aggression.

(q) Troops having already entered, and proclamations been distributed in the country.

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ed to the interests of the powers of the north. What, indeed, has Sweden gained since its monarch has adhered to the interests of England? (r)—Nothing could afflict the emperor of Russia so much as to see Sweden and Russia disunited; and it still depends on his Swedish majesty to take, but immediately, such a part as may preserve the two states in an intimate alliance, and in perfect harmony. (s)

No. IV.—Sir; I have punctually received the different dispatches you have addressed to me, as well by the post as by the Field-Jäger Rattinsky, and latterly by the chamberlain, Cont de Pahlen. I render, Sir, all justice to your great activity and zeal for the service, and I shall do myself a real pleasure in appreciating them properly to the emperor. The rescript which you will find inclosed, and the insignia of the order of St. Vladimir, which his imperial majesty has deigned to confer upon you, will prove to you, that he is perfectly satisfied with the manner in which you have served him.—From the very sincere interest which I take in your concerns, I will also confide to you, that however brilliant the testimony of his favour, which the emperor has this day given to you, may be, his munificence to you will not be bounded by it. His majesty proposes also to add to your income, and I have reason to believe, that as soon as you arrive here you will obtain the rent of an estate (Arunda). The emperor has been very well satisfied with the lists of the Swedish fleets, which you have sent me, and I expect, with impatience, the accounts which you have promised me respecting the land forces and the interior of the country.—At the present moment, information of this kind is more necessary than ever, and you will yourself feel, Sir, what an important service you will render to his imperial majesty, in procuring the most exact accounts possible. If you should want proper opportunities for forwarding them, you will keep them by you, and bring them yourself, in case of your at any time quitting Sweden.—To judge from all appearances, it seems difficult to avoid a most complete rupture with that power; but till that takes place, you will remain at your post, and continue the same line of con-

duct you have hitherto observed; but it is proper that, without affecting to prepare for it, you should nevertheless hold yourself in readiness to depart the moment circumstances require it. In regard to the precautions necessary to be taken respecting your cyphers, and the archives of your mission, I cannot, without doubt, do better than trust to your own prudence. I shall not forward to Baron de Stedingk till some days after the departure of this courier; and as I directed you in my ostensible dispatch to communicate this declaration to the Swedish minister, I think it necessary to warn you, Sir, not to take this step before you have sent off your courier to M. de Lisakenwitsch, with the packet inclosed, to his address; and I think it will be proper to tell this courier the time to quit the Swedish frontiers.—It is, then, that you are to place the declaration in question in the hands of Baron De Chreuchheim, and insist, with this minister, upon a definitive answer from the king, in order to send it us by the return of the same courier which I expedite, and which you will send back to me as soon as possible.—The experience of the past is a certain security to me, that, in the important commission with which you are at present charged, you will spare no pains to answer the confidence with which his majesty has so justly honoured you.—I have the honour to be,——COUNT NICHOLAS DE ROMANZOFF.—To M. d'Alopeus, Stockholm.

No. V.—SIR—Some persons think that Baron Armfeldt, little satisfied with the manner in which he is treated by the King of Sweden, may perhaps be disposed to quit entirely the court of Stockholm; as in reality he is not a Swede, but a native of Finland, he may perhaps be gained over, which, in the present situation of affairs, would be of great importance to us. On this account, before you quit Sweden, you will see the propriety of sounding the sentiments of M. Armfeldt.—If he should be inclined to be open with you, you will not neglect to discuss matters in detail; and, without entering into any positive obligation, you will confine yourself to the letting him see all the advantages which may most flatter his ambition. You will greatly oblige me, Sir, by immediately apprising me what may be the result of your proceeding on this subject (t). Knowing your experience in

(r) What has Russia gained since its monarch has adhered to the interests of France? What have Germany, Spain, and Italy gained?

(s) What would then become of the liberty of the Fins and the diet of Abo, which have been already promised in the name of the emperor?

(t) The whole of this is the excess of insolence. Baron d'Armfeldt may have been impatient of inactivity for a single moment, at a crisis so dangerous to his country. It is

business, (v) I need not observe to you how essential it is that this kind of negotiation should be carried on in such a manner, that you do not commit yourself, and in this I reckon entirely upon your prudence.—I have the honour to be, &c.—**LE COMTE NICOLAS DE ROMANZOFF.**—St. Petersburg, Feb. 5, 1808.

No. VI.—**SIR**—I sent you, in due course, copies of the two notes which I caused to be transmitted on the 24th September, and 16th November, to the Swedish ambassador, as well as his reply to the first. Herewith I transmit to you the one which he addressed to me on the 9th of January, also the second. You will see, Sir, that the contents of his note in no ways answers the immediate demands which our master has made to engage the king of Sweden to take measures in common with the three other northern powers, to defend the Baltic (u) against the attempts of England; his imperial majesty has, therefore, determined to make a declaration, in order to assure himself of the real disposition of his neighbour, the king of Sweden; you will receive, herewith, a copy of this declaration; I will not send it to baron de Stedingk until some days after the departure of this courier. In the mean time I will confidentially make it known to M. Le Baron de Blome; you will also communicate it to the minister of his Danish

false that he has either been ill-treated or discontented. "He is no subject of the king, since he is a native of Swedish Finland." What an inference, even before the war! "To gain him over will be an important acquisition: flatter his ambition"—(such is the language). You, Springporten, Knoring, Haselstrom—traitors of every description, now speak. Was it ever in the power of the emperor to alleviate your remorse by offices and emoluments? Could these protect you from the contempt and execration of every honest man, even in Russia itself?

(v) It is this very experience that justifies the measures of the king with regard to M. Alopeus.

(u) In all these places the guarantee of the Baltic has no sense, unless it means to secure Cronstadt and Revel from the fate of Copenhagen. Russia, the ally of England, is alone to have the privilege of summoning fleets into the Baltic, without a word being said of closing the passage; but no sooner does she quarrel with England, than she cries out for help to shut it.

majesty, and also the last note of the Swedish ambassador. You will observe, on this occasion, to M. Le Count de Bernstorff, that the emperor will take every measure in his power eventually to defend Denmark and to serve her cause. His imperial majesty rests in the firm hope, that this monarch will, on his part, press the king of Sweden to unite with them, and if he will not, that he will take part openly against him; that he will pursue, with activity, the preparations for war, proceed without loss of time in all the measures necessary relative to it, and that he will cordially join all his efforts to those of Russia. (w)—I have the honour to be,—**THE COUNT NICOLAS DE ROMANZOFF.**—St. Petersburg, Feb. 5, 1808.—To Mr. De Lisakewitsch, Copenhagen.

LOCAL MILITIA.—*Abstract of Lord Castlereagh's Local Militia Bill.*

The 1st enacting clause, empowers his Majesty to establish a local force for the defence of the realm.

The 2d, enacts, that the number of men enrolled under the act, shall not exceed such number as will, including the effective Yeomanry and Volunteers amount to — times (six times was the amount suggested by Lord Castlereagh,) the Militia quotas of such counties.

The 3d, that the deficiencies in the effective Volunteers shall be supplied by the Militia under the act.

The 4th, that the counties may be divided into divisions, in any case in which more than one regiment of Local Militia is ordered to be raised.

The 5th, extends the powers of Militia Acts to this Act.

The 6th, that men to be raised under this Act, shall be ballotted from persons between the ages of — and —, returned on the lists now existing, (from 18 to 35 years of age.)

The 7th, excuses persons of bodily inability.

The 8th, enacts, that no artied clerk, or apprentice, nor any poor man who has more than one child born in wedlock, nor any person under the height of — shall, by reason thereof, be exempt from being ballotted and serving under this Act, though they may be exempt from serving in the Militia. *To be continued.*

(w) All that has been done, the Danish monarchy has pressed, pronounced, &c. &c. There are few monarchies which possess so much frankness.

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